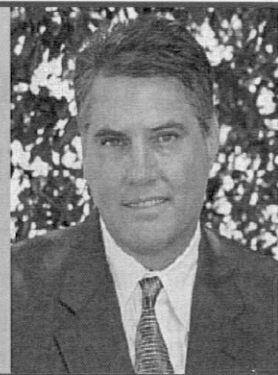


State Lines

BY LOUISIANA INSURANCE COMMISSIONER ROBERT WOOLEY



LOUISIANA SUPPORTS STATE REGULATION BY CREATING ASSURE COALITION

AUGUST 14 WAS A PROUD DAY FOR me and for Louisiana. It was on that day that Mike Pickens, NAIC president and Arkansas Insurance Commissioner, joined me in Baton Rouge at the Department of Insurance to officially kick off Louisiana's ASSURE program.

The Alliance for Sound State Uniform Regulatory Efficiency (ASSURE) was initiated by the NAIC at my urging as a way to counteract and respond to federal legislation aimed at usurping states' rights to regulate insurance. It is a state-level grassroots effort aimed at blocking legislation now pending in Congress. This legislation proposes that a federal takeover of the regulation of insurance should occur through the formation of a centralized Federal Bureau of Insurance.

ASSURE is a non-profit coalition of consumers, legislators, regulators, industry, and business

leaders who believe that state governments are better equipped than the federal government to regulate the insurance industry and protect America's consumers. Although it

maintaining vital consumer protections and education initiatives, as well as promoting streamlined national standards that recognize a unique and evolving state-based marketplace."

"REGULATION BY THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT WOULD COST LOUISIANA \$200 MILLION ANNUALLY, ROB CONSUMERS OF THEIR RIGHT TO LOCAL PROTECTION, AND BOG DOWN EFFICIENT STATE REGULATORY PROCESSES."

**-ROBERT WOOLEY,
LOUISIANA INSURANCE COMMISSIONER**

Since the creation of the ASSURE program, 16 other states have joined Louisiana in setting up their ASSURE coalitions and partnering with the NAIC to educate consumers across the nation and lawmakers in Washington about the advantages of state insurance regulation.

is a national organization, its state-based identity allows the program to be tailored to each individual state. The mission of the ASSURE coalition is:

"...to improve and defend state insurance regulation by supporting greater efficiency and uniformity in regulatory practices while proactively and aggressively

Grassroots level participation allows individual members, who can join free of charge, the opportunity to participate by contacting the media, community opinion leaders and lawmakers regarding upcoming issues or events related to states' regulatory rights. Rather than raise our

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individual voices with concerns about the federal government usurping our rights, the ASSURE coalition brings together a large group of people speaking with one voice. There is power in numbers, and the ASSURE coalitions help to harness that power in order to make sure that the future of state regulation is maintained.

The arguments for maintaining and strengthening state insurance regulation are many and compelling. Takeover of insurance regulation by the federal government would cost Louisiana more than \$200 million dollars yearly, rob consumers of their right to local protection and bog efficient state government claims and regulatory processes in the mire of federal bureaucracy.

In addition, it would be a terrible burden for the consumer and the insurance professional to have to address regulatory concerns nationally that we currently help them resolve at the local level. Imagine having to tell your policyholders that they must consult the federal

ance license. Federal government regulation has its place, but it would not be an effective or efficient replacement for the state regulation of insurance.

Some say that the federal takeover of insurance regulation isn't going to happen, at least not this year. That may be true, but if we don't stand up for our right to regulate our own industry at the local level, I am convinced that such a takeover could become a reality in the very near future. We must remain vigilant in our efforts to maintain the current system of state insurance regulation.

For more information, please contact your State Insurance Department or the NAIC.



Commissioner Robert Wooley is joined by NAIC President and Arkansas Insurance Commissioner Mike Pickens, at a press conference in Baton Rouge to kick off the ASSURE program in Louisiana.

government if they have a complaint against an insurance company. And, more personally, imagine being forced to wade through the mire of federal bureaucracy to sort out a minor glitch regarding your insur-